

Message Text

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ACTION SNM-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10
JUSE-00 NSAE-00 CTME-00 TRSE-00 ICA-20 NSC-05
OES-07 OMB-01 HEW-06 AID-05 /086 W
-----056653 261259Z /45

R 260937Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2515
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY PARIS

UNCLAS THE HAGUE 2319

PARIS FOR DEA

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SNAR, NL
SUBJECT: AVAILABILITY OF LEGALLY CONTROLLED MEDICATION TO
AMERICANS TRAVELING ABROAD

REF: 77 STATE 255976; STATE 99011

1. THE PUBLIC HEALTH MINISTRY HAS PROVIDED US THE FOLLOWING
INFORMATION IN RESPONSE TO THE QUESTIONS POSED IN REFTEL A.
2. IT IS POSSIBLE IN THE NETHERLANDS FOR AN ADDICT TO OBTAIN
PRESCRIPTIONS FOR METHADONE FROM ANY FAMILY DOCTOR OR SPECIALIST.
THE GOVERNMENT DISCOURAGES THIS PRACTICE AND PLANS TO OUTLAW
IT. IN THE MEANTIME, WHILE NOT ENCOURAGING US TO PUBLICIZE
THE POSSIBILITY, THE GOVERNMENT ACKNOWLEDGES THAT VISITING
AMERICANS CAN USE THIS MEANS TO OBTAIN METHADONE IN AN EMER-
GENCY. THE PRESCRIPTIONS ARE SUBJECT TO SPECIAL REGULATIONS
GOVERNING REGISTRATION AND DELIVERY.
3. AN ADDICT CAN ALSO SEEK METHADONE FROM A NUMBER OF ORGANI-
ZATIONS WHICH RENDER ASSISTANCE, THE MOST IMPORTANT BEING
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THE CONSULTATION BUREAUS FOR ALCOHOL AND DRUGS. DOCTORS
ATTACHED TO THESE ORGANIZATIONS ARE ALLOWED TO PRESCRIBE
METHADONE. WHETHER THEY DO SO DEPENDS ON THE VIEWS OF BOTH
THE ORGANIZATION AND THE DOCTOR TOWARD METHADONE TREATMENT.
THE GOVERNMENT CANNOT PROVIDE A LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS PRESCRIBING
METHADONE BECAUSE IT DOES NOT KNOW THE POLICY OF EACH SEPARATE
ORGANIZATION TOWARD THE DRUG. NORMALLY, ORGANIZATIONS REQUIRE

ADDICTS TREATED WITH METHADONE TO PARTICIPATE IN THERAPEUTIC PROGRAMS, BUT LANGUAGE DIFFERENCES RULE OUT SUCH PARTICIPATION BY MOST FOREIGNERS. HOWEVER, EVEN IN THIS RESPECT ORGANIZATIONS DIFFER.

4. THE PREFERRED METHOD SUGGESTED BY THE GOVERNMENT IS FOR AN AMERICAN ADDICT TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS SOME MONTHS PRIOR TO COMING TO THE NETHERLANDS TO HAVE HIS HOME CLINIC CONTACT THE CONSULTATION BUREAU OF ALCOHOL AND DRUGS, 818 KEIZERSGRACHT, AMSTERDAM. THE BUREAU WILL GIVE TEMPORARY PRESCRIPTIONS FOR METHADONE TO FOREIGNERS IN EXCEPTIONAL CASES, SUCH AS ARTISTS ON TOUR OR PEOPLE SPENDING SOME TIME IN THE NETHERLANDS FOR STUDY. THE GOVERNMENT CAUTIONS THAT BECAUSE OF THE TIME-CONSUMING ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE AND THE OVERBURDENING OF THE TREATMENT CLINICS, THIS METHOD IS NOT SUITABLE FOR ORDINARY TOURISTS.

5. ALTHOUGH SECTION 5 OF THE OPIUM ACT ALLOWS ADDICTS TO BRING CONTROLLED MEDICATIONS INTO THE COUNTRY, UNTIL AN EXECUTIVE REGULATION HAS BEEN MADE IT WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE TO TRANSPORT CONTROLLED DRUGS ACROSS THE BORDERS.

6. A COPY OF THE ENGLISH TEXT OF THE OPIUM ACT WAS SENT TO THE DEPARTMENT UNDER COVER OF THE HAGUE A-12. SECTION 6, SUBSECTION 3, ALLOWS POSSESSION "FOR PERSONAL MEDICAL USE."

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7. FOR A SUMMARY OF DUTCH GOVERNMENT POLICIES TOWARD MEDICAL TREATMENT OF DRUG ADDICTS, SEE THE HAGUE 523.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SUPPLIES, MEDICAL CARE, DRUGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978THEHA02319
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780178-0426
Format: TEL
From: THE HAGUE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780413/aaaaakfm.tel
Line Count: 97
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 6a51bda6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SNM
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 STATE 255976, 78 STATE 99011
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2836619
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AVAILABILITY OF LEGALLY CONTROLLED MEDICATION TO AMERICANS TRAVELING ABROAD
TAGS: SNAR, NL, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbs://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/6a51bda6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014